

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
RESEARCH
SERVICES, INC. ASSOCIATES FOR CULTURAL RESOURCE STUDIES

December 9, 1998

MEMORANDUM

TO: Patrick Ritter
Facsimile No. 415 981-0801
Wayne Praskins
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FROM: Ronald L. Reno
RE: Carson River Mercury Site, MS 004,
Unexpected Discoveries at FX-6 Personal Privacy

Mechanical excavation of the terrace area beneath FX-6 Personal Privacy has revealed additional mill-related intact features through most of this portion of the site. The archaeological remains have been preserved by the terrace.

Due to the complexity of these features (walls, tailings deposits, possible tailings ditches, artifact concentrations) and presence of a new haystack at the northern end of the terrace, it rapidly became impossible to excavate in this confined area with the large loader. I asked Ron King to get a backhoe on site as soon as possible so work could continue tracing out the extent of these features and removing dirt for ramp construction. The backhoe was obtained and mechanical excavation continued with three pieces of equipment instead of the planned two.

Today it looks like mechanical excavation can start on the south end of the hillside following ramp construction.

If we do not obtain Advisory Council permission to begin data recovery excavations in the expanded feature system on the lower terrace, mechanical excavation will probably have to be halted by the end of today or perhaps early tomorrow.

Based on what we have seen so far in the terrace area, we can deal with the exposed features using the same methods as proposed in the December 3, 1998 revised monitoring and treatment plan. No supplemental plan needs to be sent to SHPO and the Council for this area unless something entirely different and clearly not mill-related turns up.

With at least a doubling of the size of the archaeological features in the terrace area, this involves a corresponding increase in the amount of time and effort needed to document what is being uncovered there.

Both Ron King and the archaeological field crew are doing everything they can to keep work moving forward at this site. Please notify us at the earliest possible moment when Advisory Council permission is available to keep doing so.